

# A few words about FAMILY PLANNING

## Community Health Plan

The Community Health Plan would like to offer you a few words about family planning.

### FAMILY PLANNING

Family planning means to plan how many children you want to have and how often. Family planning can be done through methods of birth control. Choosing a method of birth control is not always easy. Ask yourself what method is the best for you.



Think about the method's:

- |                 |                  |
|-----------------|------------------|
| ' effectiveness | ' benefits       |
| ' side-effects  | ' comfortability |

### METHODS OF BIRTH CONTROL

**Abstinence** simply means not having sex.

**Condoms** are made of latex. They fit over erect penis and hold the sperm.

**Depo Provera** are artificial hormones injected by a health provider. It stops ovaries from releasing an egg each month.

**Diaphragm or cervical cup** is a small cap made of rubber. It is placed into the vagina to cover the cervix (opening of the uterus). It prevents sperm from fertilizing egg.

**Spermicides** are mild chemicals that are placed into the vagina. They kill sperm and help prevent pregnancy. Spermicides are available as foam, cream, jelly, suppository and film (a 2-inch by 2-inch paper-thin sheet).

**The Intrauterine Device (IUD)** is a small device which is placed into the cavity of the uterus. It prevents sperm from fertilizing egg.

**Norplant Implants** are six matchstick size rods placed into the upper arm. A set of Norplant Implants releases a hormone very slowly. It can prevent pregnancy for at least five years.

**The Pill** is made of artificial hormones. It stops the ovaries from releasing an egg each month.

**Sterilization for women** by tubal sterilization is an operation which blocks the tubes carrying a woman's egg to her uterus.

**A vasectomy/Sterilization for men** is an operation which blocks the tubes that carry a man's sperm to the penis.

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As a Community Health Plan member, you do not need a referral/authorization from your doctor or health plan to receive family planning services. You should discuss the choice with your doctor. He or she can help you find the best method for you. The best method will be based on your medical history and lifestyle. Your doctor can tell you more about birth control methods.

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### Remember:

- ' Make sure you follow the directions on how to use the birth control method you choose.
- ' Many birth control methods fail because they are not used the right way.

*Writer: Roberto Bellosso, M.P.H.*

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This newsletter should not be considered specific medical advice, as each circumstance is different. If you need medical advice, talk to your doctor and do not rely on knowledge gained from this information. Community Health Plan/Health and Provider Education Unit, October, 2000.